

**Mississippi Development Authority
Workforce Training Fund
Guidelines**

1. PURPOSE

The Mississippi Development Authority (MDA) Workforce Training Fund was established by the State Legislature during the Second Extraordinary Session in 2010. The purpose of the MDA Workforce Training Funds is to provide workforce training through state institutions of higher learning, community and junior colleges, and Workforce Investment Network job centers, referred to in this document as Training Providers, to meet workforce training needs not met by other resources. The funds shall be used to effectively retain and keep businesses competitive through skills training and upgrades for new and existing full-time employees. The program is structured to be flexible to meet the training objectives of a business. Training Providers are encouraged to use these grants in connection with training funded from Federal, State, and other sources.

2. ELIGIBILITY

a. Eligible Applicants

Applications for assistance must be submitted by a state institution of higher learning, a public community or junior college, or the administrative entity for a Workforce Investment Area on behalf of a Workforce Investment Network (WIN) Job Center (Training Providers).

b. Eligible Businesses

- i. Existing** – For-profit businesses that have been in operation for a minimum of one year prior to the application date, are current on all federal and state tax obligations, and are financially viable are eligible to apply.
- ii. New** – For-profit businesses that have been in operation for less than one year prior to the application date, are current on all federal and state tax obligations, are financially viable and have an adequate two-year business plan are eligible to apply.

c. Eligible Projects

Eligible projects must meet critical training needs of a specific business (Requesting Business) to train new or existing employees in skills necessary for the operation of the business. MDA Workforce Training funds should be used to maximize existing training resources available through the Workforce Enhancement Training Funds, the Workforce Investment Act and other sources. The training provider and affected business must demonstrate that it is not eligible

for or has exhausted funding through these or other existing programs. Applications must include documentation that the requested funding is not available from other training resources.

The MDA Workforce Training Fund shall be available for, but not limited to, the following industry sectors:

- Aerospace
- Clean and Renewable Energy
- Data Services
- Defense
- Logistics
- Manufacturing and Processing
- Tourism

MDA Workforce Training Funds may not be used to provide training to a gaming enterprise.

3. REQUIREMENTS

a. Project Requirements –

The following types of training may be funded:

- Occupational skills training designed to meet the special requirements of a business or a group of businesses and conducted with employer commitment to continue to retain all trained individuals upon successful completion of the training
- Educational training including, but not limited to, workplace literacy, basic skills, soft skills, and English as a second language
- Training in strategies to improve efficiency of business operations

An applicant must demonstrate the planned effect of the proposed training on business operations and identify any transferable skills to be acquired by the employees.

b. Application

i. Process

- 1) A business desiring training must first contact the applicable Community or Junior College, Workforce Investment Board or Institution of Higher Learning to request training and determine if funds from other sources are available for the desired training activity.
- 2) If adequate funding is not available from other sources, the Requesting Business will work with the applicable Community or Junior College, Workforce Investment Board or Institution of Higher Learning to complete the MDA Workforce Training Application.

ii. Application Format

The applicable Community or Junior College, Workforce Investment Board or Institution of Higher Learning, in partnership with the business, must submit the application according to the appropriate format included with this document as an attachment.

Two (2) copies of the application must be submitted to MDA. MDA will evaluate the application according to the following criteria:

- The application must be complete, with all information supplied,
- The application should ensure that the proposed training is consistent with MDA's workforce training priorities,
- The application must clearly describe the training to be delivered, state the training objectives, and describe how the funds will be used to meet the objectives,
- The application must document that the training is needed and that other resources are not available to meet the need, and
- Any additional criteria required by MDA.

4. CONDITIONS FOR REIMBURSEMENT OF FUNDS

a. The maximum amount for MDA Workforce Training Funds that may be provided for any one project is \$100,000.

b. Reimbursable Training Expenses

- i.** Instructor or trainer salaries or tuition
- ii.** Curriculum development
- iii.** Textbooks/manuals
- iv.** Wage reimbursements – WIN Job Center on-the-job training only.

c. Conditions

A Grant Agreement will be executed between the Training Provider and MDA. The Grant Agreement cannot be executed until all required conditions in these guidelines of the application are met and all documentation is received.

d. Process

MDA will release Workforce Training funds on a reimbursement basis for approved eligible costs of the project as incurred. Funds will be released upon receipt of the Workforce Training Reimbursement Requisition and supporting documentation from the Training Provider. Funds may not be drawn down more frequently than once per month. Training Provider has three months from the last date training as agreed to in the Grant Agreement to request reimbursement for training project costs.

e. Monitoring and Auditing

MDA may monitor all projects to ensure compliance with the original application and the Grant Agreement. Funds provided under MDA Workforce Training

Funds are subject to audit by the State Department of Audit.

f. Project Performance

The State Workforce Investment Board (SWIB) has created a centralized location for workforce and economic information of the state. The SWIB Data Center provides access to high-quality, timely, and relevant information that supports everyday decision making and strategic planning in Mississippi. MDA Workforce Training Funds program performance shall be tracked in that center.

The training provider must maintain and transfer reliable project participant information and datasets into the SWIB Data Center as prescribed in the Grant Agreement.

5. WAIVER

These guidelines may be amended by MDA at any time. MDA, at its discretion, may waive any requirement of the guidelines to the extent that the result of such waiver is to promote the public purpose of the Act and is not prohibited by State law.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Program inquiries and applications should be directed to:

Mississippi Development Authority
Workforce Training Fund
Attention: Wanda Land
Post Office Box 849
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
Telephone: (601) 359-3060

MISSISSIPPI DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY WORKFORCE TRAINING FUND (WTF) PROGRAM APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Any business or industry desiring additional training assistance from a state institution of higher learning, a public community or junior college, or the administrative entity for a Workforce Investment Area on behalf of a Workforce Investment Network (WIN) Job Center, hereafter referred to as Training Providers, under this section shall work with the Training Provider to complete and submit an application consisting of the information listed below. Applications to MDA will be made by the Training Provider and shall include the items requested below.

1. A description of the purpose for which the assistance is requested;
2. A description of how the proposed training is consistent with MDA's workforce training priorities;
3. A description of the training to be delivered and training objectives and how the funds will be used to meet the objectives;
4. A statement of the number and types of jobs to be training, identifying the number of new and existing employees to receive training;
5. A **detailed** description of the need for training is needed;
6. A **detailed** description and supporting documentation of the steps taken to access or utilize other resources and documentation that such resources are not available to meet the need;
7. A **detailed** description, supported by a line item cost estimate, of the training project
8. A proposed schedule for the planning, provision and completion of training; and
9. Any other information required by the MDA.

Upon receipt of the application from a business or industry, the local economic development entity may apply to the MDA for assistance under this section.

The MDA shall have sole discretion in the awarding of WTF funds, provided that the business or industry and the Training Provider have met the statutory requirements of this section.

Two (2) copies of the application must be submitted to MDA. MDA will evaluate the application to determine if the project meets the program criteria.

A Grant Agreement will be executed between the Training Provider and MDA. The Grant Agreement cannot be executed until all required conditions in these guidelines have been met and all documentation received.

Program inquiries and applications should be directed to:

Mississippi Development Authority

Workforce Training Fund
Attention: Wanda Land
Post Office Box 849
Jackson, Mississippi 39205
Telephone: (601) 359-3060